

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 06598 251306Z

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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O 251227Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1325

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 6598

EXDIS

HANDLE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AEMR, LE, US

SUBJECT: BEIRUT EVACUATION: PLO PLOYS

1. DEPARTMENT MAY NOTE FROM NEWS STORIES EMANATING OUT OF BEIRUT THAT PLO IS TAKING LINE HERE WITH AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS THAT PLO HAD CONVEYED TO US SEVERAL DAYS AGO THEIR PREFERENCE FOR SEA OR AIR EVACUATION. WITH REGARD TO OUR CONTACTS WITH PLO SECURITY OFFICER, THIS IS ABSOLUTELY UNTRUE. NEITHER ON JULY 19, WHEN FIRST POSTPONEMENT WAS ISSUED (BEIRUT 6424), NOR ON JULY 21, WHEN WE PROPOSED SATURDAY, JULY 24, AS AN ALTERNATIVE (BEIRUT 6497) DID PLO CONTACT SUGGEST SEA OR AIR ALTERNATIVE. IN FACT, PLO CONTACT GAVE BRITISH CONSULAR OFFICER THE INFORMATION DURING MEETING ON JULY 22 THAT PLO PREFERRED LAND TO SEA EVACUATION (BEIRUT 6506).

2. IN OUR 6506, DATED JULY 22 (PAR 3), HOWEVER, WE SPECULATED THAT PLO MIGHT INDEED PREFER SEA EVACUATION SINCE WEEK OR SO EARLIER FAROUK QADDOUMI HAD SAID AS MUCH TO EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR. THIS IS WHY WE HAD CONSIDERED IT ADVISABLE FOR US TO GO BACK TO PLO AT SOME POINT WITH THIS ALTERNATIVE PROPOSITION--WHICH, INDEED, DEPARTMENT INSTRUCTED US TO DO.
SEELYE

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